

Region Commander Safety Message #13



Suicide Prevention

Eastern Region is not immune to the tragedy of suicide. Leaders at all levels must be involved in suicide prevention. Each of us must be aware of the potential for suicides and recognize that cadets, Soldiers, and employees who are contemplating or at risk for suicide require immediate, active assistance and intervention. Every member of the Region must be vigilant to the following signs which may indicate someone is contemplating suicide:


- **VERBAL SIGNS (Suicide Threats):** "You'd be better off without me." "I wish I was dead." "My problems will soon be ended." "I want to go to sleep and never wake up."
- **PLANS FOR DEATH:** Giving away prized possessions, making a will, putting affairs in order, getting something for a suicide (a lethal weapon or medication, etc.).
- **DEPRESSION:** Unusual sadness, anxiety, or loss of interests.
- **BEHAVIOR CHANGES:** Sleeplessness, weight loss, loss of appetite, uncharacteristic irritability.

Signs of emotional distress require the observer to act. For the schools, that means tapping into campus programs, local ministries, and local doctors as appropriate. Pass the word to your supervisor, call the chaplain, or dial the local suicide hotline. For the brigades, that amounts to contacting the installation suicide prevention points of contact and visiting them as appropriate.

Do not risk regrets later because you were not observant enough to recognize a suicide signal until it was too late. Your continued attention to the Region's obligation to prepare and care for cadets, Soldiers, and civilian employees does have an impact and can help reduce suicides and the tragic burden for survivors.

A tool available for you is located on Cadet Command's website under "Well Being/Quality of Life," click on "Health," scroll down to "Suicide Awareness." There, you will find the suicide prevention hot line number to include other crisis hotline numbers. Moreover, you will find important suicide resources-slide presentations as well.

We must also be vigilant to discreet, almost undetectable signals. When a tragedy occurs, someone, somewhere missed signals that existed.


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Commanding

"There are 30,575 suicides per year in the United States or about one every 17 minutes for a total of 75 per day. That averages about 12.5 per 100,000." "Suicide is ranked eighth overall cause of death in the U.S. after heart disease, cancer, stroke, accidents, pneumonia, diabetes, and cirrhosis."